

## Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02

USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 SAM-01 SAJ-01 SIL-01 LAB-04 /047 W

----- 013641

R 031025Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 756

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

UNCLAS BERLIN 5645

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GE, UR

SUBJECT: MAY DAY IN EAST BERLIN

1. MAY DAY FESTIVITIES IN EAST BERLIN WERE HIGHLIGHTED BY A MILITARY DEMONSTRATION, INCLUDING A HALF/HOUR PARADE OF TROOPS AND DISPLAY OF VOLKSARMEE EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE SOVIET UNION. IN THE GRANDSTAND WERE PARTY FIRST SECRETARY HONECKER AND OTHER MEMBERS OF GDR POLITBURO, SOVIET AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV, OTHER AMBASSADORS, AND A NUMBER OF SOVIET GENERALS. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE SELECTED CROWD IN THE TWO GRANDSTANDS FACING EACH OTHER ALONG THE PARADE ROUTE, PUBLIC REACTION TO THE FESTIVITIES WAS DISTINCTLY APATHETIC, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A DISPLAY OF ENTHUSIASM FOR THE MILITARY DEMONSTRATION.

2. MAIN THEMES WERE THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY OVER FASCISM AND THE VICTORY OF THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM WHICH HAD OVERTHROWN THAT COUNTRY'S "PUPPET REGIME". ONE EBULLIENT TELEVISION COMMENTATOR SAID THAT THE APPEARANCE

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OF MILITARY UNITS SERVED AS A WARNING THAT ANY NATO

AGGRESSION WOULD BE THROWN BACK AND THE ATTACKERS WOULD BE GIVEN A LESSON. THE MAJOR SPEECH BY NEWLY-ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE FREE GERMAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT (FDGB), HARRY TISCH (BERLIN 5636) WAS UNDISTINGUISHED.

3. COMMENT: THE REGIME PROVIDED AN OVER-REHEARSED, PROPAGANDA-LADEN THREE HOURS OF DIVERSION FOR A SUB-STATIONAL PORTION OF EAST BERLIN'S POPULATION. THE THEMES WERE NOT STRIDENT OR SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED AGAINST THE US. IT WAS A WARM AND SUNNY DAY AFTER A LONG SPELL OF GREY SKIES. THE BEST INDEX OF HOW MOST PEOPLE FELT MAY LIE IN THE FACT THAT SOMETHING OF A RECORD FOR CROWD DISPERSAL WAS SET AT THE END.GROVE

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